

King Medal Is Supported

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WASHINGTON — Following the urging of the widow of Martin Luther King Jr., a congressional subcommittee Wednesday approved the issue of a national medal commemorating her slain husband in honor of his works "in behalf of human rights for all men."

Mrs. Coretta Scott King said striking of such medals by the U.S. Mint would "enhance our ability to continue his struggle for decent relations among all men and women."

Stella B. Hackel, director of the Mint, testified in favor of legislation authorizing the medals "commemorating the life and ideals" of King.

David L. Ganz, legislative counsel for the American Numismatic Association, also testified in favor of the medals.

"It is our belief that the Martin Luther King Jr. medal ought to be a flagship for what could be a series of national medals to honor minority Americans and that eventually, the whole of this series could be part of the regular stock of mint medals produced by the

Mint and sold by the Treasury Department," Ganz told a subcommittee of the House on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs.

Pending legislation authorizes striking 104,000 medals in bronze, silver and gold which would be furnished to the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change at Atlanta, which, in turn, could sell the medals to help raise funds for the center.

Ms. Hackel said she has no objection to raising the 104,000 figure to 500,000.

She made the statement after Ganz complained that the "poor and disenfranchised" would be unable to afford the 104,000 large medals.

He suggested the minting of thousands of additional smaller-size "mini-medals" that lower-income people could afford to buy.

"Thus, hundreds of thousands of youngsters, nationwide, who have not previously been exposed to the ideals and the aspirations of Martin Luther King Jr., could have the opportunity of acquiring an inexpensive commemorative medal of this great American," Ganz said.